

REMARKS

Applicants' representative wishes to thank Examiners McCloud and Nappi for the courtesy extended during the personal interview conducted on February 12, 2003. A separate record of the substance of the interview is included in the remarks which follow.

The claim amendments appearing above eliminate various informalities, including the informality referred to by the Examiner in section 1 on page 2 of the Office Action. It is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now in this application fully comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph.

As amended, claim 11 incorporates limitations previously appearing in claim 13, which has been canceled. The rejection set forth in section 2 on pages 2-3 of the Office Action, therefore, is moot.

Claim 13 was previously rejected, together with claims 14 and 16, as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,780,785 to Eckel in view of U.S. Patent 3,712,413 to Eckel. As far as this rejection may be considered applicable to claim 11 as amended above, reconsideration is requested. Claim 11 specifies that each structured preform body comprises, in addition to other features, columns, each of which has a one-side bevel cut on a side of the column adapted to face a room, and a moderator gap which has a one-side bevel cut on its base side. As discussed during the interview, it is respectfully

submitted that these features serve to distinguish the present invention from the patents relied on by the Examiner.

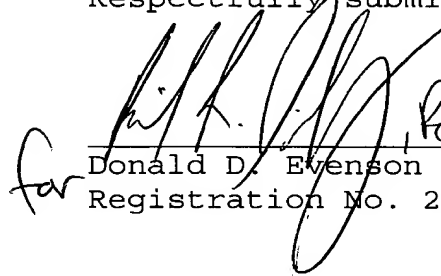
It is acknowledged by the Examiner, in section 4 on page 4 of the Office Action, that the Eckel ('785) acoustic absorbtion device does not include a moderator gap having a one-side bevel cut. The modification to the Eckel ('785) device proposed by the Examiner is noted; however, as pointed out during the interview, nothing in either the Eckel ('785) patent disclosure or the Eckel ('413) patent disclosure suggests that an improvement in sound absorption in the Eckel ('785) device would result from the modification proposed. Neither the prior art or any proper rationale suggests the modification to the Eckel ('785) device proposed by the Examiner, and claim 11 as amended above is patentable.

The rest of the claims remaining in this application now depend on claim 11 and are patentable as well.

This application is now in condition for allowance.
Should the Examiner have any questions after considering this
Reply, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned
attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

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